

J. O. Kellison was up from Jacob last Thursday. His catch of foxes this year was 23; thirteen reds and ten grays. He got one wild cat, but this was a big one—57 inches from tip. The book gives the average at thirtysix inches.

Uncle Bob Gibson was over from Elk on Saturday. He is an humble working churchman, who finds joy in religion and he works at it. He says it is no harm, but rather a good deed, to kill a bear on Sunday, and I hold with him. One reason is a bear kills sheep on Sunday as well as any other day.

Uncle Bob tells me the ramps are just a little the best flavored this season he has ever tasted. One reason, he says, is that the growth is thrifty on account of so much rain and that the lack of sun to tan them has made the bulbs so tender, sweet and mild.

Uncle Bob was counting up the sheep killed in about two weeks by the old Shavers Cheat Mountain big foot bear the other day that they know about, three for him, five for L. D. Sharp and five for Norman Shaw, and one for a widow lady. This bear had killed and piled up five sheep and was eating on them when found. This piling up of sheep is the sign of an old bear.

Uncle Bob said the only thing wrong about killing an old sheep stealing bear on Sunday or any other day is that immediately two other bears sprang spontaneously up to take his place. The reason for this is that when the boss of the range falls, other bears move in where the old big one had heretofore kept them out. The late Henry Gilmer used to tell the tale of killing the same old buck on a given ridge seven years in succession. The explanation was easy—when the monarch of the survey was gone, the good feeding ground was taken by the next buck in line, to hold until he was killed or an abler buck grew up.

### The Belled Buzzard

For several years past large numbers of buzzards have assembled each spring in March at the Roost on Jerico Flats, but have been notable by their absence so far this year, except one immense specimen was observed on March 15th. This leader wore a bell which could be heard faintly but distinctly. The bird was not seen again, or any other in the neighborhood, until the 6th of April, when a pair were seen gliding on moveless wings over the mountain.

It is thought possible that the failure of the buzzard to show here in numbers so late in the season is due to the unseasonable cold, or possibly the migrants not having gone far enough south last fall perished of cold and hunger in the unprecedented freezes of the winter, this variety of the vulture family not adapted to extreme cold.

Although of a sluggish nature, unlike the nobler birds of prey, and subsisting on carrion, the buzzard scrupulously exercises its flight power morning and evening in prolonged circling, instinctively knowing that if it lost the ability to fly its species would soon perish.

It is said that the Wright Brothers and other inventors of gliding air machines, studied attentively the flight of the buzzard, which is said not to be excelled by any other bird of land or sea.

*Paradise, Tennessee*  
*4/20/40*



## THE FAIR - AUG 19 TO 24

### WHAT IS THE POCAHONTAS COUNTY FAIR?

The Fair is a graphic method of portraying what has been accomplished by the various agencies operating in Pocahontas County. It is a moving picture of the routine activities of our citizens and is made to show something of our industries, our occupations, and our social organizations—a representation of Pocahontas County people at work and play.

The Fair aims at the improvement of the County. Exhibitors and visitors from a distance bring advanced ideas and methods; our own citizens, by associating with each other and comparing exhibits are enabled to choose the best and to formulate plans for the improvement of the community, the farm, the home, the church and the school.

The Fair seeks to advertise Pocahontas County, not by overdrawing, but by giving strangers an opportunity to become acquainted with the county and its people.

The Fair registers changes. Instead of the great areas of worthless cutover lands which occupied so much of the county a few years ago, we have extensive parks at Seneca, Watoga and Droop Mountain. There is the National Forestry Service with a camp at Thornwood. The State Fish Hatchery on Stony Creek, three miles from the Fairgrounds, furnishes a supply of trout for the streams. The parks and National Forests are game refuges, insuring an abundant stock of wild game for our woods. These State and Federal agencies so recently come to Pocahontas, have entered wholeheartedly into the plans for the improvement of the county and are actively represented at the Fair.

Farm improvement in Pocahontas has been phenomenal. Those who saw the exhibits of livestock and farm crops at our early Fairs will note this improvement when they examine the exhibits this year. The Fair is one of the agencies responsible for these marked gains in potato development, methods of marketing and in quality of livestock and farm crops.

Public education is deemed an essential element of progress hence the schools have always held a place in the Pocahontas County Fair. The public school building, erected by the schools of the county, houses an educational exhibit that is unique in its quality and completeness. That education has been long nurtured by this mountain people is evidenced by the fact that among the first pioneers to die at the hands of Redmen in what is now Pocahontas County was a school teacher, slain on the river's bank, just above the cattle barn, and but a few rods outside the Fairgrounds.

The Fair is the Home Coming Season for Pocahontas. It is a time when we welcome back our friends and relatives. The automobile and our modern system of highways have aided in making Home Coming one of the most enjoyable features of our Fair.

And talking about pictures! No picture is complete without its frame. The setting of the Pocahontas County Fair is in keeping with its high aims. The site is that of old Fort Drinnen where the advancing pioneers from east of the mountains met with the Shawnees and Iroquois. Its beautiful meadow lands lie by the historic Greenbrier; it is rimmed around by the forest clad hills and overlooked by the towering ranges of the western Alleghenies.

L. S. Geiger of Stony Bottom, brings in a bunch of potato seed pods. These potato berries are the first Mr Geiger ever saw; they are no new things to me, though we do not see them now as often as we used to years ago. There are quite a number of plants in Mr Geiger's patch of an acre and a quarter producing seed this year. The patch was planted in Irish cobbles, certified seed, and carefully sprayed. It is Mr Geiger's intention to cultivate some of the seed in the potato berries, and see what comes of it. You are liable to get most anything in the way of potato berries, and see what comes of it. You are liable to get most anything in the way of potatoes from the little seeds—mostly something no account. You plant the seeds in a pot in the fall and grow the plants in the house during the winter. The plants have each a tuber about the size of a pea, of most any shape and skin color. Pick out the small potatoes you think give promise of amounting to something and plant them out in the ground next spring. The scientific plant breeders at experimental stations are continually trying out potato seed. They do not go it blind, for they know what is needed in the way of strains of high quality potatoes of heavy yield with resistance to diseases. Their aim is to continue in one the good points of several varieties. They begin at the beginning by crossing two tried and true varieties by hand pollination. Thousands of the resulting plants are selected right off, and many more fall by the wayside

in the rigid trying out process through the years of trial.

Speaking about potatoes, some weeks ago there was a note in this paper about potatoes persisting in a field many years between cultivations. Now, Warwick Ratliff comes forward with the news that he has potato plants persisting in a field for eighteen seasons. This year he is again cultivating the ground, and he has marked and fertilized the volunteers. He will report later as to yield.

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7/25/40



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### GRAIN AND POTATO SHOW

The 1940 Grain and Potato Show for Pocahontas County held at Marlinton last Saturday was one of the largest and best in a long series. This annual event is sponsored by the Bank of Marlinton and the First National Bank, with J. A. Sydenstricker and A. H. McFerrin actively in charge as the committee of the Banker Farmer Association.

While there may be more entries in the potato classes, the entries were never before quite so good. This was also true of the small grain classes. The corn entries were numerous and the quality was excellent, though this rainy season has not been considered the best of corn years.

The farmers who have taken interest in this annual exhibit through the years have not only brought up

the quality and increased the yield of their crops through better farm practice, but they have perfected themselves in the art of preparing exhibits to show in the various classes.

There was a largely attended farmer's institute in connection with the Grain and Potato Show. The subject was sheep, and what could be done to bring back and excel the grade of lambs produced twenty years ago. In other lines of husbandry our farmers have gone up and onward; the quality of lambs produced has steadily gone down and backward. Among the speakers were Dr. C. W. Wilson, of the University, Milton Dolley, of Pendleton county, and Moffett Williams, of Marlinton.

These expert, successful sheep men agreed on the four cardinal points of breed, feed, shelter and parasites; these four and the greatest of these is food.

Now the fact was evident that those progressive farmers who were in attendance at the institute Saturday are producers of good quality lambs, and know from experience much what the experts were telling us. The value lies in the fact that they will be encouraged by the meeting to be disciples to influence shortsighted neighbors from breeding from cull ewe lambs; from attempting to economize by short rations, and exposure to weather and parasites.

The big money crop of this Pocahontas County is sheep, and while years ago our lambs were tops and in demand, the quality has been allowed to go down grade so much the packers are complaining bitterly. They complain about lambs which are so big as to pass the bloom stage before marketing, and lambs so puny and small they never reach the bloom stage for best marketing and eating.

Anyway the Banker-Farmer Association, under the direction of John Sydenstricker and Hanley McFerrin, have set out to do for our main industry, sheep raising, what has been accomplished by the annual exhibit for grain, grass and potatoes, and this editor is volunteering to help all he can. Go and do thou likewise.

Pocahontas Times  
11/14/40



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Pubishes Book Of Verse  
"The Versatile Mind" will be the  
title of the new volume of poetry to  
be published by the New York Publish  
ing Service for Mrs Charlotte Mason  
Dickson of Second Creek. The con  
tract for the publication was signed  
Tuesday. Mrs Dickson has written  
poetry for various papers and maga  
zines, such as the West Virginia Re  
view. She is the wife of Edgar F.  
Dickson. --Monroe Watchman.

Pocahontas Times

10/10/40